

Letters to the Editor

Greetings from Newfoundland & Labrador,

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Students represents the 30,000 students studying at all public post-secondary institutions in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since 1990, college and university tuition has increased by about 250%. This has obviously had detrimental effects on our students. In particular, it has assured student poverty and higher student debt.

Three years ago, when Federal funding changes indicated that this trend would continue, student advocates here started work with the Canadian Federation of Students to lobby our officials for a tuition freeze.

In January of this year the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador did just that, they implemented a freeze on tuition freeze. For students at the College of the North Atlantic, the Fisheries and Marine Institute, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College and Memorial University of Newfoundland, tuition will NOT increase for the next two years. This result was not achieved easily.

Our lobby for a tuition freeze was successful for a number of reasons. I guess the main reason was because the majority of our elected student representatives cared enough about the issues to put their hearts and souls into it. They weren't interested in getting elected because they wanted an office or because they wanted to be popular or because they thought it would be cool. We were fortunate to have a majority of true student activists—students who are genuinely concerned about the well being of the students they represent.

These devoted people worked at it.

Although it was never easy, it doesn't look that difficult looking back. We used three basic ingredients: 1) a consistent and coherent argument, 2) the media, and 3) a hell of a lot of meetings with government officials.

I hope that the student union at UPEI can take something from our success and achieve likewise for you.

Good Luck!

Dale Kirby
Chairperson
Newfoundland and Labrador
Federation of Students

The Guardian Call

Editor:

I called the Guardian on Wednesday, March 11, 1999, and I'd like to explain why. I informed them that the "Free nude photos" captions on Andrew Peppin's campaign posters were creating a controversy on campus. I added that, if they were interested, the candidates were giving speeches in the Pit at 12:30. Informing the newspaper isn't a crime, and people without the facts shouldn't be blaming others.

A reporter did write a story and it was front page news; the talk of the town. What I tried to accomplish was to let the public know what was happening and the effects it was having. Specifically, I tried to highlight Mr. Peppin's lack of stance on issues. He had no political platform and his attitude treated everything like one big joke. Without any interest in important issues, I don't see how he's fit to be SU president. I think he's making a mockery of himself as a political candidate. He expresses no intent to work on the issues of tuition, communication among representatives, facilities, or organizations. Aren't elections about politics? It's not enough to be nice and have a sense of humour. I'm sure the other candidates possess these qualities, but many of their platforms deal with important issues.

I don't have a personal vengeance against Mr. Peppin, I'm fighting for what I believe in and expressing my opinions about his political strategies.

Yes, we have freedom of speech and Mr. Peppin certainly used it, but the results of this controversy include half-truths, stereotypes, hatred, denial, genderism and sexism. Voting is a right and shouldn't be misused. If you vote in this year's UPEI student union election, pick a candidate who takes a stand on important issues and offers proposals to better our situation at UPEI.

Bruce Henry

A+ for UPEI Student

Dear Editor,

We are writing you in response to a letter posted in the front page of the Thursday issue of the Guardian. This letter depicted the efforts of a particular student who is running for president of our student union. With all of the important issues facing students these days; such as increasing tuition and student loan repayments etc. we feel that the time put into writing such a useless letter should have put into a letter that would help students. Mr. Peppin is trying to get people's attention because here at UPEI we have only a 5% turn out of student voters. When we saw the poster with the title "Free Nude Photos" we stopped to see what it really was about because you know these kinds of posters are only a ploy to get the readers attention. From that poster we became aware of the upcoming election. Unlike all the other posters around campus Mr. Peppin politely advertised the voting dates and times, something that most students are not aware of until they see the so called voting stations in the breezeway. What we still can't figure out is why Miss Daley is so offended by the posters? It is only increasing attention about the election. For once students are having fun with the election and really competing with one another. Miss Daley, we believe that you should spend your time more wisely and not pick on something so minor. There are more important issues out there to talk about than a measly poster. In conclusion, we would suspect that Mr. Peppin would thank you because you have put his name in the spotlight and everyone will know who he is and that he will win the election because of you. Mr. Peppin, good work and good luck! You have our votes!

Patrick Ross

Aaron Smith